

Public Comment of Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director of the Coalition on Human Needs,
to the Census Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting, March 17-18, 2022

The Coalition on Human Needs is an alliance of national groups representing human service providers, faith groups, policy experts and civil rights, labor, and others advocating to meet the needs of people with low incomes. We use and provide trainings about Census data regularly.

We are deeply concerned by the data released on March 10 showing that high rates of Blacks, Hispanics, and young children were missed in the 2020 census. The Census data is usually used to create the Population Estimates Series, which is then used both to allocate many federal funds and to calibrate the American Community Survey which is used to allocate other federal funds. Missing these people could result in significant inequitable misallocation of federal funds for a decade.

We are pleased that the Bureau has indicated that it will conduct research to see how it can use the data released last week, and other data expected later this year, to adjust the base of the Population Estimates Program. Given the number of Blacks, Hispanics, other racial and ethnic groups, and young children missed, we call upon the Bureau to conduct research on how any proposed changes would affect each of these populations, and release their findings to stakeholders. Adjustments should be made to improve the data for all these groups.

Once the Bureau has identified the best possible approach to adjusting the base for the population estimates, it should use that approach throughout the decade until we have more accurate 2030 Census results.

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